

ANSWER

TO

Mr. COLLIER'S DEFENCE

OF HIS

Absolution of Sir William Parkins,

At the Place of

EXECUTION.

Which Defence is Printed at length, and considered Paragraph by Paragraph.

NOW R. Collier's Defence of his Absolution having made a great Noise, and being lookt upon as very material by his own Party, its thought fit for the satisfaction of the Publick to give his Defence *Verbatim*, that the Arguments of this Absolving Patriark may appear in their full strength, and we doubt not but the Answers annexed may be of some use to let his deluded Party see how he has betraid their Cause instead of serving ours by his unprecedented Absolution, and weak Defence.

DEFENCE

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M^R being present, and in some measure Officiating at the Place of Execution on Friday last, has been extremely misunderstood. The Weekly Intelligence, together with the Remarker, have censured this Action with a great deal of Liberty, and Heat. I thank God I am not easily disturbed with intemperate Language, especially when 'tis given without Occasion. So that if Matters had gone no farther, I could have passed over the ill Usage and said nothing. I confess, having received notice that some Persons of Figure threatened me with Imprisonment, I took a little care of myself; and, as it happen'd, not without reason. For on Monday about Twelve at Night, six or eight Persons rushed into my Lodgings, broke open a Trunk, and seiz'd some Papers of Value, tho' perfectly Inoffensive, and Foreign to their Purpose. And since, I understand there is a Bill found against me for High Misdemeanours. And now one would think I had done something very extraordinary.

I shall therefore make a brief Report of Matters of Fact, and leave the World to judge, whether all these Censures and Severities are deserved or not.

ANSWER.

B^Y Mr. Colliers proemium, where he talks of his having officiated at the place of Execution, one would at first glance be induced to think that he had been assistant to the Hangman, and truly to be serious with him, their's reason to fear that his performance there, was neither so useful nor harmless as that of the other, for certainly any thing which contributes to the deluding of the Soul (as its to be feared this cheating Absolution did) is of more dangerous Consequence than that which tends to the destruction of the Body.

The liberty taken by the Weekly Intelligence, and the Remarker which Mr. Collier complains of, comes far short of the boundless liberty which he himself took to pronounce such an Absolution, which is now censured with as much or more severity by the Fathers of the Church, whose proper Province it is. And if Mr. Collier did no more than what is required by the Church of England in the Office for Visitation of the Sick, why did he die? does not he know that the Church of England is established by Law? and that there was never a time when the Subjects had Justice more freely allowed them than now. Or does Mr. Collier suppose that he understands the Law better than the Judge who gave it in Charge to the Grand Jury, to enquire into the Legality of his Practice? or is there any reason to think that Gentlemen of the Communion of the Church of England are so ill acquainted with the Offices of that Church, that they are not competent Judges when they are legally performed? or that the whole Grand Jury should be so far transported with Prejudice or Passion,

sion, as to find a Bill of High Misdemeanour against him, if there had been no cause for it, but this is like the Arrogance of the Party, for *no doubt they are the Men, and Wisdom shall sit with them.*

That the Government had reason to order him to be taken up, all men but those of his own kidney are very well satisfied, and that he has done something very extraordinary, cannot be denied, for the Rubrick is concerning persons that are Sick, and says not own word of impenitent Criminals: The Rubrick enjoyns that the sick person shall be moved to make a special Confession if his Conscience be troubled with any weighty matter, but it does not appear that Mr Collier took that method with Sir William Parkins, though its apparent from that wretched Gentleman's Confession to the Committee of Parliament, that he own'd himself Criminal, in consenting to the Assassination, which was *matter of weight enough to trouble his Conscience*, to think that he should have brought himself to that shameful death; and entail'd perpetual disgrace upon his Family by doing that which he own'd to be a Crime, and as his fault had been publick, Mr Collier should for his own sake at least have mov'd him to a publick Confession, which seeing he did not, it was ground enough for the Government to presume that Mr Collier did rather harden him in his Impenitence, than move him to Repentance, and will justifie it in the eyes of the World, in sending to apprehend him.

It appears farther that Mr Collier did an extraordinary thing, because he absolved Sir William not only without a publick Confession of that which the Friends of the Government thought a publick fault, but even without a publick Confession of that which his own party must needs own to be a fault, if they look upon the Late King James's Cause to be the Cause of God and true Religion, as it is express'd in Sir John Friends Paper, for Sir William had actually taken the Oaths to the present King, which according to them must be no less than a *renouncing the cause of God and true Religion*, and seeing this was a publick fault, his Confession ought to have been likewise publick before Absolution, for he that is not willing to take shame for his publick sins, can never be reckoned a true Penitent, or fit to receive Absolution; and how it can be justified in Mr Collier to absolve Sir William in the Name of God, who according to his own Principles had publicly denied the Cause of God, without a solemn and publick declaration of his Sorrow for it. Let those who have any sense of Religion determine.

DEFENCE

Sir William Parkins (whom I had not seen for four or five Years last past) after his Tryal, desired me to come to him in order to his Preparation for another World. I accordingly visited him in Newgate, as I thought myself oblig'd by my Character. I was put in the List of those who had leave to see him by publick Order, and had the first two Days the Liberty of conversing with

with him in private. Afterwards I was not permitted to Speak, or Pray with him alone, a Keeper being always present. At last even this Permission was recall'd, inasmuch that I could never see him from Wednesday Morning, April the 1st, till Friday at the Place of Execution. Sir William being under an Expectation of Death from the time of his Sentence, had given me the State of his Conscience, and there ore desired the Solemn Absolution of the Church, might be Pronounced to him by me, the last Day. And understanding I was refused Admittance on Friday Morning, he sent me Word that he would gladly see me at the Place of Execution. I went thither, and gave him the Absolution he requested, it being impracticable for me to do it elsewhere. This Office I perform'd Word for Word in Form, as it stands in the Visitation of the Sick. And now where lies the great Crime of all this. When a Man has declared his Sorrow for all the Faults, and Miscarriages of his Life, and qualified himself for the Priviledge of Absolution, with what Justice could it be denied him? Ought not Dying Persons to be Supported in their last Agonies, and pass into the other World with all the Advantage the Church can give them? I am surpris'd, so regular a Proceeding as this, should give so much Offence, and make so much a Noise as I perceive it has done. Some People I understand are displeas'd at the Office being perform'd with Imposition of Hands. Now this is not only an Innocent, but an Ancient Ceremony of Absolution. 'Twas the general Practise of the Primitive Church in such cases, long before there were any Exceptions to the Roman Communion. 'Tis in the Opinion of several Fathers, and good Modern Expositors, refer'd to by the Apostle (1 Tim. 5. 22.) 'Tis likewise prescribed the Assisting Presbyters in our own Ordination-Form: But I suppose I need say no more in defence of this Circumstance. To proceed, Others seem very much shock'd at the Thing itself, and think it a strange Presumption to admit a Person charged with so high a Crime, to the benefit of Absolution. With submission, this is concluding a great deal too fast. Are all People damn'd that are cast in a Capital Indictment? If so, to what purpose are they visited by Divines? why are they exhorted to Repentance, and have Time allow'd them to fit them for Death? But if they may be acquitted hereafter, notwithstanding their Condemnation here? If they may be recover'd by Recollection, by Repentance, and Resignation, why should the Church refuse them her Pardon on Earth, when she believes tis poss'd in Heaven? The Power of the Keys was given for this purpose, that the Ministers of God might bind or loose, as the Dissolution of the Person required. The latter I sincerely believe to be Sir William's case: I judg'd him to have a full Right to all the Priviledges of Communion: And therefore had I denied him Absolution upon his Request, I had fail'd in my Duty, and gone against the Authority both of the Ancient and English Church. 'Tis said that the Nature of this Gentleman's charge required his being Absolved in Private. To this I answer, so be had been; had I been permitted to visit him the last Morning. But this Liberty was refused me, more than once. And I hope I shall not be blamed for Impossibilities of other Mens making. In short, he seem'd very desirous of Absolution at my Hands, as being the only Person acquainted with his Condition. Privately 'twas not in my Power to give it him; So that he must either

either receive it Publickly from me, or not at all; But Sir William confess'd himself acquainted with the intended Assassination. Pray did he confess it to me, and have I revealed any Part of his Confession? Then I had been guilty of High Misdemeanor indeed. I had broke the 13th. Canon, and been Pronounced Irregular by the Church. And he that falls under Irregularity, is for ever after incapable of Executing the Office of a Priest. (Dr. Heylin's Introduction to Cyprian Angel. p. 6.) I confess there is an Exception in the Canon, but that does not reach the Case in Hand, even upon the largest Supposition. Well? But Sir William own'd this Charge before the Committee. How could I know that? I neither saw Sir William after his Examination, till Friday Noon, nor the Votes wh. ch. mentioned it till after that Time. But he confess'd it in his Paper. What then? Which way does the Paper concern me? 'Tis well known Sir William Parkins was a Man of Sense, and bred to Law and Letters, and needed no help to assist him in Writing a few Lines. Besides, I was not permitted to come near him for more than two Days before he suffer'd. Neither was he allow'd so much as Pen and Ink till the last Morning. Then it was that he penn'd his Speech, as I am told by those who were present; and having read it before the Keeper, deliver'd a Copy of it to a Friend, which was not shew'd to me till after the Execution. Indeed, I did believe he would leave some Paper behind him, both because 'tis customary upon such sad Occasions; and because on Tuesday Night when he expected Death on Wednesday, he desired Pen Ink and Paper, for that purpose.

ANSWER.

NO body blames Mr. Collier for visiting Sir William in prison, or for attending him at the place of Execution, but he is justly blamable for giving publick Absolution to a man who had been guilty of publick faults, both in our sense and in his own without publick Repentance, which was a direct impeachment of the Justice of the Nation, and a solemn declaration to all the beholders, that Sir William had done nothing worthy of Death, but was a Martyr and no Malefactor. If the Ordinary of Newgate, should presume to Absolve Notorious Fellows or Highwaymen at the place of Execution, without a publick declaration of their sorrow for their Crimes, all men would say that he did thereby encourage Felony and Robbery: And why the Government should not put the like construction upon Mr. Collier's Absolution of Sir William Parkins, who was condemned for endeavouring to Murder the King, and procure an Invasion from France, let his own reason answer; and why his own Party should not look upon him as an encourager of those who deny the cause of God and true Religion, seeing he absolved one who was notoriously guilty of that Crime in their sense without publick repentance, let him answer it to them and his own Conscience. Its true he alleges that Sir William declared his sorrow for all the faults and miscarriages of his Life, and qualified himself for absolution, but he does not tell us that his concern in the Assassination, or his taking the Oath

to King William was among those faults, and though he really had confessed them, certainly Mr. Collier will not be so bold as to say that a private Confession is atonement enough for publick sins; the very light of Reason will teach him that Sir William ought to have made publick satisfaction to those to whom he had given a publick offence, and Mr. Collier cannot be ignorant of the Apostles Command to Timothy, 1 Ep. 5. 20. to rebuke them that sin openly in the presence of all; and seeing he seems to think that the laying on of hands mentioned in the 22. v. refers to Absolution he ought have taken heed to the Command, not to do it suddenly, which he must needs have contravened, by doing it before a publick repentance. Mr. Collier may now likewise perceive that the Fathers of the Church reflect upon the manner of his Absolution, as insolent and unpresidential; and if he pleases to look into the Commentaries, he will find that the far greater part are against his Exposition of that place, tho its not the manner of the Absolution; which is so much excepted against as that he should have absolved them without publick Repentance; and till he answers that material Objection against it, his little Questions, whether all people be damned that are cast in a Capital Indictment, &c. are nothing to the purpose, and his judgment that Sir William had a Right to Absolution, must be lookt upon as Erroneous. And whereas Mr. Collier thinks it a sufficient Apology for his doing it publicly, because he could not be admitted to do it otherwise; he would do well to observe that the publickness of the performance does only aggravate the fault, but does not make it one, and considering the spirit of the Party theres reason to think, that the place of Execution was chosen as the most proper to harden the poor Criminals in their obstinacy, and to sound a Trumpet to Rebellion, and Assassination, for certainly to die a Martyr for the Cause of God and Religion, and to be recommended to the Tribunal of Heaven as such by the Churches Absolution, is a very persuasive Argument, to make any man follow such Courses as will entitle him to those priviledges.

Mr. Collier's Assertion, that he had gone against the Authority both of the Ancient and English Church if he had refused Sir William Absolution, is spoken without book, the very perusal of the Office for Visitation of the Sick is enough to answer the Objection as to the Church of England; and let him produce any Canon of the Ancient Church for giving Publick Absolution to a Condemned Criminal, or a Publick Offender without Publick Repentance if he can.

Mr. Collier asks so many little impertinent Questions about his being privy to Sir William's Acknowledgment of his Concern in the Assassination, that they argue his Guilt more than his Innocence; an Ingenuous Man would have plainly told whether he knew of it or not: And as for the 113th Canon of the Church, by which he must have been pronounc'd Irregular, and by consequence incapable of the Priesthood ever after, if he had reveal'd Sir William's Confession: He may take for Answer, That if either That, or any other Canon of the Church does encourage him to Absolve condemned Parricides and Assassines without publick Repentance, its the Interest of the State to Nail

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Nail 'em up. But seeing so many of the Bishops, to whom the Clergy swear Canonical Obedience, have declared him Irregular already, it's all one whether the Canons roar or be silent, the Bishops have the chief Power in making the Canons, and the best Right to interpret them. But without all this quibbling, Mr. Collier could not but know that it was proved against Sir William, and that those upon whom the same Witnesses had proved the same Crime, confessed it at the Gallows; which might have given Mr. Collier Ground enough to suspect Sir William's Guilt, and by consequence to have mov'd him to a special Confession, according to the Rubrick, and then he had been in no hazard of the 113th Canon, nor any other of the Guns which lie in the Magazine at the West-end of Paul's: But we hear nothing of any such fair Dealing; nor will his faint Declaration against any Methods of Murder be lookt upon, by any Man of Common Sense, as an Argument to prove, that Mr. Collier did not allow of the Assassination for which Sir William Parkins was condemned; and seeing he knows himself suspected and charged as an Incourager of it by the Justice of the Nation: It is no more than what might have been expected from an honest Man, for Mr. Collier to have publisht his Abhorrence of that intended Murder in a more particular manner.

D E F E N C E

AN D now after all, I desire to know in what single Circumstance I have mis-be-have myself, or done any thing unbecoming my Profession? 'Tis very hard a Man must be Persecuted for Performing the Obligations of his Office, and the Duties of common Friendship, and Humanity; As for any Methods of Murder. I dislike them no less than those who rail loudest; and nothing but a Mercenary Malice could suggest the contrary. But if the Functions of the Priesthood, and the Assistances of Religion, and the Reading the Publick Liturgy are grown a Crime, I am not concerned at the Imputation: I hope the complying Clergy will take some care to check the Disorders, and inform the ignorance of their People a little better. If they are unreprieved for these scandalous Excesses, their Pastors must one Day expect to account for it.

As for those in Power, 'tis possible they may have been govern'd by Mis-report, and sudden Resentment: If so, second Thoughts, and the Reason of the case will put a stop to their Severities. And that this may be the issue of the Business, I think myself oblig'd to wish as well for their sake, as my own.

Apr. 9th. 1696.

Jer. Collier.

ANSWER.

MR. Collier, in his Conclusion, asks the same Questions over and over again, which have been answer'd already; and according to his rate of Ingenuity, he would insinuate, that he is persecuted for performance of the Functions of the Priesthood, and reading the publick Liturgy; whereas he is not only accused, but proved to have transgressed the Orders of both: And by this time, I suppose, he is convinc'd in his Mortification, that it is not only the Ignorant People who find fault with his Conduct, but also the Learned Bishops, whom the Conquying Clergy have no power to check, if they had never so much mind to it.

MR. Collier's Epilogue is very Magisterial, and those in Power, it seems, are concern'd to Regard it; as well for their own sakes as the Reverend Authors. This is indeed one of the most Gentle Applications to those in Power, especially from the Pen of a Clergyman, that we shall readily meet with; and really, when I reflect upon the Impudent Behaviour of Cranborne at his Tryal and elsewhere, I am apt to think that he is one of the Doctor's disciples; and I assure him, if it be so, we have good reason to say, *Like Master, like Scholar.*

DEFENCE

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Advertisement.

✂ A Letter to the Three Absolvers, Mr. Cook, Mr. Collier and Mr. Ennis. Being Reflections on the Papers delivered by Sir John Friend and Sir William Parkin, to the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, at Tyburn, the place of Execution, April 2. 1696. Which said P A P E R S are Printed at length, and answered Paragraph by Paragraph. Price 6d.

✂ The Parable of the Three Jackdaws. &c. both, Printed for R. Baldwin. 1696.

London, Printed for R. Baldwin, near the Oxford Arms in Warwick-Lane. 1696. Price 2d.